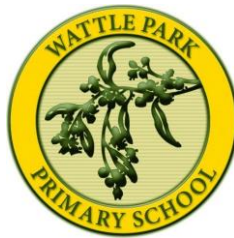


Wattle Park Primary School

Student Engagement & Well-Being Policy



To be read in conjunction with
*Effective Schools are Engaging Schools –
Student Engagement Policy Guidelines*

2014

Principal: Gayle Cope
School Council President: Stephen Burgess

Table of Contents

- 1. SCHOOL PROFILE STATEMENT**
- 2. WHOLE-SCHOOL PREVENTION STATEMENT**
- 3. RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**
- 4. SHARED EXPECTATIONS**
- 5. SCHOOL ACTIONS AND CONSEQUENCES**

REFERENCES

* SEE 2014 ADDITIONS IN BLUE AS REQUIRED BY DEECD

1 School profile statement

Wattle Park Primary School was first established in 1914. It has a current enrolment of 364 students who come from various ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds. The school site is approximately 3.4 hectares and is situated within a large green belt in the middle of Melbourne's eastern suburbs.

Wattle Park provides a happy and secure environment in which students are able to value and enjoy learning. The curriculum is designed to cater for individual needs.

The core areas of English and Mathematics continue to be essential areas of learning at Wattle Park Primary School. There are a number of different learning areas (Domains) and many of these are covered as part of the Inquiry Learning process for all years from Prep through Six. Computers are integrated into all learning and teaching programs. Specialist teaching areas include Library, Music, Physical Education and Sport, Art, LOTE-Italian, Reading Recovery and additional support.

We believe students will grow in confidence and self-esteem as a result of:

- Developing intellectual, personal, social, physical and creative abilities.
- Learning to work effectively, as individuals and as members of a team.
- Acquiring decision-making, problem solving and critical thinking skills.

As a result we believe our students will:

- Embrace learning to become informed and knowledgeable individuals.
- Become increasingly responsible for themselves, for others and for their environment.
- Have a strong sense of belonging in a community which values, cares for and respects them.

A strength of Wattle Park Primary School is the value placed on 'community'. Parents and teachers work in an educational partnership to support each child's learning journey. Parental involvement in the many aspects of school life is highly valued. Parent volunteers provide support to teachers in classroom programs in areas such as Early Literacy Program (Prep - Year 4), Learning Centre tasks, Sport, excursions and camps. This collaborative approach with teachers and students results in the development of positive attitudes and educational outcomes.

The school has an excellent team of dedicated and experienced teachers who individually and collectively offer a variety of talents to complement the school's diverse program. Teachers work together and plan in appropriate area levels on a regular basis. Teachers are further involved in the planning and conducting of extra curricula activities such as school concerts, camps, sports and other cultural experiences.

The school's learning and teaching programs are designed to assist students in developing skills for lifelong learning. The values which form the basis of our actions are: Respect, Encourage, Value, Care, Challenge and to be Responsible. They are based on the belief that students have the ability and the right to learn. Thus, the school ensures that the environment is friendly, calm and orderly, safe, responsive to its community's diversity and celebrates success in all areas of student achievement.

A continued upgrading of facilities at the school and improvement to the already attractive grounds will prepare Wattle Park's students for the future.

Currently the school is undergoing considerable building works with the construction of a School Gymnasium. The gymnasium will comprise a full-sized basketball court, canteen, sports storage area, stage and toilets.

Another exciting addition to the school commencing in 2011 will be a new two storey junior/middle school building with 8 flexible teaching and learning spaces replacing the existing 4 classroom 'Junior Site'.

This will create a learning environment that provides the students and staff of Wattle Park with the best possible facilities. It will provide an environment for the staff to be able to plan, create and maintain a first class teaching and learning environment for the students in their care, so that student learning outcomes are maximised.

The school's priority for our Strategic Plan is:

- Improved Teaching & Learning Practices.
- Improved ICT skills for all students

The support of these areas combined with a continued focus on Numeracy will be our resourcing priorities.

Wattle Park Primary School is part of the Whitehorse Network of schools.

Our school has a commitment to the environment and is working towards becoming a five star sustainable school.

There are several key elements that are important when considering student engagement and the wellbeing of a student:

- 1. Creating a positive school culture embedded in daily practices and the provision of engaging learning opportunities provided through curriculum content.*
- 2. Providing a safe environment where students are treated equitably and fairly, have clear and consistent expectations and consequence.*
- 3. Discussing and communicating school values regularly, as well as integrating the behaviours into behaviour management processes and everyday interactions.*
- 4. Teachers knowing their students and constantly striving to provide stimulating learning opportunities catering for individual needs, with timely intervention when required.*
- 5. Providing professional development to support teachers in understanding students' learning needs, as well as the support services available.*
- 6. Providing students with a variety of intra-school activities and specialist programs.*
- 7. Providing curriculum approaches that focus on developing independence, self confidence and increasing self reflection and self responsibility for learning.*

8. *Encouraging student voice in curriculum content, decision-making and developing leadership skills.*
9. *Valuing our diverse student population for their cultural difference, different skills and talents.*
10. *Involving our school community is fundamental to student learning, thus we strive to maintain strong communication links, access our community expertise regularly and ensuring the community feel a sense of belonging and connectedness to our school.*

2 Whole-school prevention statement

Creating a positive and engaging school culture forms the basis on which we believe optimal student learning will occur. Our School Strategic Plan and Annual Implementation Plan have focus in this area.

Wattle Park Primary School aims to provide quality educational programs within a supportive learning environment that promotes personal excellence and fosters participation and communication. The school aims to provide a positive, fair and respectful culture.

The school values are:

- To be Responsible – being accountable for your own actions.
- Respect – respecting others and the environment.
- Care – for yourself and others.
- Value – each other's differences.
- Challenge – yourself to reach your personal best.
- Encourage – others to achieve their best.

2.1 Elements of Student Engagement

Student engagement and school connectedness underpin effective student learning. Student engagement can be defined as three interrelated components: behavioural, emotional and cognitive.

Behavioural Engagement: refers to students' participation in education including academic, social and extracurricular activities.

Emotional Engagement: encompasses students' emotional reactions in the classroom and in the school. It can be defined as students' sense of belonging or connectedness to the school.

Cognitive Engagement: relates to students' investment in learning and their intrinsic motivation and self regulation.

2.2 Programs Encompassing the Engagement Elements

Our school aims to provide students with a range of stimulating and engaging activities so that they feel involved and motivated. The programs listed below are in place to support our students to attend school, participate in class and engage in learning:

Extra Curricula Activities

- Outdoor Education Camps – Levels 3 and 4.
- Excursions/Incursions
- Enrichment Programs
- ICAS English, Spelling and Maths Assessment
- Victorian Premiers Reading Challenge
- MS Read-A-Thon
- Interschool Sport
- Swimming Program
- Christian Religious Education
- Musicorp Instrumental Instruction
- Piano lessons
- Individual guitar tuition
- Tree planting at Back Creek
- Open Music room at lunchtimes
- Reading to the residents at Cameron Close Retirement Village

Student Clubs and Organisations

- Choir – Junior and Senior
- School Band
- Recorder Group
- Student Representative Council (SRC)
- Student Leadership: Music, Environment, School Ambassador, Health Leaders...
- Scarecrow – Sustainability Team

Special Events

- Education Week
- Open Days
- Annual Concert
- Movie Night
- Carols Night
- Music Soiree

Specialist Programs

- Reading Recovery
- Art
- Music
- Physical Education
- Library
- Languages Other than English (Italian)

Student Wellbeing Programs

- Buddies Program
- Family Life

- Life Education
- Students With Disabilities Program

Transition Programs

- Prep Transition
- Secondary School Placement
- New Arrivals
- Year Level Transition

2.3 School Policies to Support Student Engagement and Wellbeing

- Student Code Of Conduct Policy
- Homework Policy
- Acceptable Use Agreements (ICTs)
- Individual Learning Improvement Plans

2.4 DEECD Initiatives

- Australian Curriculum/Victorian Essential Learning Standards (AusVELS)
- Principals of Learning and Teaching (PoLT)
- Assessment For, As and Of Learning
- Students Reports and alternative assessment initiatives
- e⁵
- Teaching and Learning coach

2.5 Measures of Engagement

- AusVELS Teacher Judgements
- NAPLAN
- Student attendance data
- Yard Incident and Accident data
- Surveys: Staff Opinion, Attitudes to School, Parent Opinion, PoLT student surveys, attendance records in extra curricula activities, student groups and special events

3 Rights and Responsibilities

Guiding principles

Every member of the school community has a right to fully participate in an educational environment that is safe, supportive and inclusive. Everyone deserves to be treated with respect and dignity. All students have the right to have access to high quality schooling providing them with opportunities to explore and build on their gifts and talents.

Equal Opportunity

The Equal Opportunity Act 1995

(<http://www.det.vic.gov.au/hrweb/divequity/eeo/eeoact.htm>) sets out the types or grounds of discrimination that are unlawful and aims to promote community recognition and acceptance of the equality of men and women, and the equality of people of all races, regardless of their

religious or political convictions, their impairments or their age.

3.3 The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006

The Charter sets out a list of 20 rights that reflect the following four basic principles:

- Freedom
- Respect
- Equality
- Dignity

The charter outlines a vision of human rights for all Victorians. The charter affirms that all people are born free and equal in dignity and rights. While the charter demands equality for all, it also emphasises the value of difference. The charter requires public authorities, including government schools and their employees, to act compatibly with human rights and to consider human rights when making decisions and delivering services.

- The right not to be discriminated against
- The right to privacy and reputation
- The right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief
- Cultural Rights

It is important to understand that with human rights comes a responsibility to respect other human rights.

All DEECD employees must act compatibly with the Charter and give proper consideration to human rights when making decisions. Everyone should:

- Encourage compliance with the Charter
- Support others to act compatibly with the Charter, and
- Respect and promote human rights

Part of the monitoring of Human Rights will be to complete the Charter Compliance Checklist on the School Compliance web site.

http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/consol_act/cohrara2006433/

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/programs/multicultural/tchhrcharter.htm>

3.4 Students with disabilities

The Disability Standards for Education 2005,

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/wellbeing/disability/handbook/legislation.htm>

clarify and make more explicit the obligations on schools and the rights of students under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*. The standards cover enrolment, participation, curriculum development, student support services, and harassment and victimisation.

An education provider must make 'reasonable adjustments' to accommodate a student with disability. An adjustment is a measure or action taken to assist a student with disability to participate in education and training on the same basis as other students. An adjustment is reasonable if it does this while taking into account the student's learning needs and balancing the interests of all parties affected, including those of the student with the disability, the education provider, staff and other students.

In determining whether an adjustment is reasonable, an education provider should take into account information about:

- the nature of the student's disability
- his or her preferred adjustment
- any adjustments that have been provided previously
- any recommended or alternative adjustments.

This information might come from the student, an associate of the student, independent experts, or a combination of these people.

An education provider should ensure that the student, or an associate of the student, has timely information about the processes for determining whether the proposed adjustment would cause unjustifiable hardship to the provider. The provider should also ensure that these processes maintain the dignity, respect, privacy and confidentiality of the student and the associates of the student, consistent with the rights of the rest of the community.

The provider may consider all likely costs and benefits, both direct and indirect, for the provider, the student and any associates of the student, and any other persons in the learning or wider community, including:

- costs associated with additional staffing, providing special resources or modifying the curriculum
- costs resulting from the student's participation in the learning environment, including any adverse impact on learning and social outcomes for the student, other students and teachers
- benefits of the student's participation in the learning environment, including positive learning and social outcomes for the student, other students and teachers, and
- any financial incentives, such as subsidies or grants, available to the provider if the student participates.

Bullying and harassment

Definitions:

Harassment is any verbal, physical or sexual conduct (including gestures) which is uninvited, unwelcome or offensive to a person.

Bullying is repeated oppression, physical or psychological, of a less powerful person by a more powerful person or group.

Cyber-bullying consists of covert, psychological bullying, conveyed through the electronic mediums such as cell-phones, web-logs and web-sites, on-line chat rooms, 'MUD' rooms (multi-user domains where individuals take on different characters) and Xangas (on-line personal profiles where some adolescents create lists of people they do not like). It is verbal (over the telephone or mobile phone), or written (flaming, threats, racial, sexual or homophobic harassment) using the various mediums available.

Examples of cyberbullying behaviour are:

- Teasing and being made fun of
- Spreading of rumours
- Sending unwanted messages
- Defamation.

Cyberbullying can happen to anyone and the bully is able to act anonymously. People can also be bullied online by groups of people such as class groups or collective members of an online community.

It is important for the school to provide a safe and friendly environment for students and staff and to encourage care, courtesy and respect for others. All persons have a legal right to protection from harassment under the Commonwealth Sex Discrimination Act and the Victorian Equal Opportunity Act.

The effects of harassment or bullying include:

- Poor health – anxiety, depression
- Lower self esteem
- Reduced study performance
- Missed classes, social withdrawal
- Reduced career prospects

If a student sees another person being harassed or bullied they should tell the person that you witnessed the incident and advise them to report it to an appropriate person. Friends of the person doing the bullying or harassing of another person are encouraged to let them know that their behaviour is unacceptable. Bystanders who do nothing to stop bullying may be contributing to the problem by providing an audience for the bully.

Harassment is usually directed at a person because of their gender, race, creed or abilities. It can be subtle or explicit.

Concerns will be taken seriously. All complaints will be treated confidentially.

Rights and Responsibilities of the School Community

Our school takes a whole-school approach to Student Wellbeing and focuses strongly on developing positive peer relationships. Good relationships, pro-social values and an engaging curriculum underpin behaviour management at the school. There is consistency in the way in which student behaviour is managed as a result of strong teacher, student and school community collaboration. The teachers have a shared philosophy contributing to consistency and continuity and this is seen in strong working and personal relationships and commitment to continuous improvement. Classes negotiate the way their 'norms' live at the beginning of the year. There is a conscious effort to select teachers and Casual Relief Teachers who fit with the school's approach to teaching and learning and student management. All adults working with our students are informed about expectations and strategies for general behaviour and classroom management to ensure consistency.

The academic program creates school pride and high expectations and this will continue to be fully supported by teachers and parents. Students are encouraged to be challenged to achieve. Social skills are embedded in classroom practice and are included in assessments. Cooperative learning and group activities in classrooms also contributes to positive peer relationships.

The school continues to teach social skills and to give awards for excellence in behaviour as well as for artistic, academic and sporting excellence. These are handed out at our weekly assembly. Assemblies are lead by Student Leaders. All students are given the opportunity to speak and perform at our weekly assembly. This is part of a planned program of confidence

building through the development of social skills. The Values Program is also a part of the school's approach.

There are a range of activities for students to be involved in to encourage connectedness to the school. Our Year Six students have a 'Buddy' in Prep. The specific social skill of 'including others' is important and is seen by staff to be revealed in the caring culture of the school. We have a multi-age 'ThinkLink' program which supports Student Pathways.

Lunchtime and Out of School Activities

Activities are offered throughout the year. These include library, music and various Enrichment programs. A number of organisations also provide out of school activities. These include those provided by Camp Australia, Craft Class, Smart Art, Tennis and others.

Student Leadership

Student leadership is a vital part of the school. Students are given real responsibilities which they take seriously. All Year 6 students have a specific responsibility as a leader and carry out this responsibility throughout their final year as part of their social skills development and contribution to our school. There is a Student Representative Council with representatives across the school. This body has many roles including making decisions about which community service activities the students will support. A house system is in operation in the school to foster team spirit and encourage students to support one another. As mentioned school leaders run assemblies, present at information sessions and act as guides for new parents on school tours.

Rights and Responsibilities of Students

Rights	Responsibilities
<p>Students have a right to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work in a secure environment where, without intimidation, bullying (including cyber-bullying) or harassment, they are able to fully develop their talents, interests and ambition. • Participate fully in the school's educational program. 	<p>Students have a responsibility to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate fully in the school's educational program and to attend regularly. Students should also be expected to display positive behaviours that demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and all other members of the school community. • Demonstrate respect for the rights of others, including the right to learn, will contribute to an engaging educational experience for themselves and other students. • As students progress through school they will be encouraged and supported to take greater responsibility for their own learning and participation as members of the whole school community. This involves developing as individual learners who increasingly manage their own learning and growth by setting goals and managing resources to achieve these

	<p>goals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students should, with support, be expected to participate fully in the school's educational program and to attend regularly. Students should also display positive behaviours that demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and all other members of the school community.
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Rights and Responsibilities of Parents/carers

Rights	Responsibilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents/carers have a right to expect that their children will be educated in a secure environment in which care, courtesy and respect for the rights of others are encouraged. 	<p>Parents/carers have a responsibility to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote positive educational outcomes for their children by taking an active interest in their child's educational progress and by modelling positive behaviours. • Ensure their child's regular attendance. • Engage in regular and constructive communication with school staff regarding their child's learning. • Support the school in maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment for all students.

Rights and Responsibilities of Teachers

Rights	Responsibilities
<p>Teachers have a right to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expect that they will be able to teach in an orderly and cooperative environment. • Be informed, within Privacy requirements, about matters relating to students that will affect the teaching and learning program for that student 	<p>Teachers have a responsibility to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fairly, reasonably and consistently implement the Engagement Policy. • Know how students learn and how to teach them effectively. • Know the content they teach. • Know their students. • Plan and assess for effective learning. • Create and maintain safe and challenging learning environments. • Use a range of teaching strategies and resources to engage students in effective learning.

4. Shared expectations

The Wattle Park Primary School community shares high expectations for all. Key features of these shared expectations are:

- Jointly negotiated, owned and implemented by all members of the school community
- Clear and specific
- Focused on positive and pro-social behaviours
- Focused on prevention and early intervention
- Supported by relevant procedures
- Consistent, fair and reasonable
- Linked to appropriate actions and consequences

Schools- principals, teachers and school staff

The school provides an educational environment where all students are valued and cared. They are made to feel they are part of the school and can engage effectively in their learning experiencing success. The school's expectations are based on our values of Being Responsible, Respect, Encourage, Care, Challenge and Value.

School expectations include:

- Inclusive teaching practices
- Accessible educational provision for all students
- Parent/carer partnerships and liaison
- Community partnerships which engage families and the community in ways that support student achievement and success
- Provision of appropriate student services
- Development and provision of appropriate, relevant and challenging curriculum that gives students the opportunity to experience success in their learning.

Wattle Park Primary School will be further investigating and the Restorative Justice Principles as part of our whole school approach. The emphasis is on re-affirming relationships through developing social and emotional skills, separating the deed from the doer and promoting relationship management rather than behaviour management.

Diversity in the school community

Students come to Wattle Park Primary School from a range of social, economic, religious and racial backgrounds. We celebrate this diversity by:

- Encouraging families to share their cultural backgrounds
- Valuing the diverse backgrounds brought to the school
- Ensuring all students have equal access to resources and opportunities
- Supporting students who may come from a family suffering economic hardship

5. School actions and consequences

A sense of self worth and personal identity assists in empowering students to take responsibility for their own actions and be involved in co-operative decision making at Wattle Park Primary School. Whole school strategies involving engagement and appropriate behaviours are fairly

and consistently applied. There are high expectations for students to monitor their own actions, relate well to others, attend regularly and to form and maintain healthy relationships.

Programs that support positive relationships are implemented across the school starting with Prep Buddies and leading on to SRC and Leadership Opportunities. These programs involve consultation with students. The aim is to promote a sense of belonging and the development of supportive relationships.

A comprehensive curriculum attempts to engage all students with inclusive teaching and learning practices. Student learning needs are addressed with a differentiated curriculum which ensures engagement and attendance issues are minimised. A personalised learning program is implemented when needed and involves scaffolding learning in identified areas to foster student connection. A whole school tracking system is used to ensure pathways planning for students at risk. Names of all students who attend Intervention, Enrichment, Reading Recovery or who have Educational or Speech assessments and others are entered on the Student Register.

Prevention and early intervention are the preferred approaches to Student Wellbeing. There is a staged response when these positive behaviour expectations are not met in the classroom. Consequences which may be used include withdrawal of privileges. Withdrawal from class may occur if a student's behaviour significantly interferes with the rights of other students to learn or the capacity of the teacher to teach a class, that student may be temporarily isolated from regular classroom activities or, in more severe cases, required to leave the classroom for a specified period of time. Teachers may require a student to finish school work that has not been completed in the regular classroom or to undertake new or additional work or duties at a reasonable time and place. No more than half the time allocated for any recess may be used for this work.

Staged Classroom Response

Step 1	Reminders of appropriate behaviour and relationship to school norms. Asking student questions as outlined in our Student Code of Conduct Booklet.
Step 2	Temporarily excluded within the classroom.
Step 3	May need to spend time in at recess or lunch time to complete work
Step 4	Discussion with Principal or Assistant Principal and the use of levelled 'Think Sheets'
Step 5	Parent support meeting initiated when frequently reaching Step 4.

A consistent whole school approach is used for playground incidents with a corresponding staged response. Actions and consequences have an educational role and aim to foster positive relationships and maintain the dignity of the student.

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3
Minor incidents of inappropriate behaviour.	Serious incidents or repeated Stage 1 incidents	Severe inappropriate behaviour
Examples Playing/running in wrong area. Disrupting others Littering	Examples Harassment verbal/physical Leaving school grounds Anti-social behaviour e.g.	

Climbing trees	stealing/vandalism. Inappropriate activities e.g. banned games	
Consequences: Warning - reminder Discussion with teacher	Student sent to Student Wellbeing Coordinator/Assistant Principal/ Principal Playground Time-out Extended Time-out – Think Sheet, contact parent about issue.	Student sent to Principal Parents contacted Discipline Meeting convened In- school suspension Suspension Expulsion

Corporal punishment is prohibited in all Victorian Schools. Corporal punishment must NOT be used at the school under any circumstances.

Discipline procedures – suspension and expulsion

When considering suspension or expulsion, procedures listed in section 4.3 of the DEECD guidelines published in the 'Effective Schools are Engaging Schools'. Student Engagement Policy Guidelines will be followed. A student support group meeting will be convened to support individuals who are considered at risk of disengagement. Parents are informed and involved at all stages. If required the support group can refer a student to community agencies for specialist intervention. A student will only be excluded from school in situations where all other measures have been implemented without success or where an immediate suspension is the only appropriate course of action.

The Wattle Park Student Engagement Policy focuses on prevention and early intervention with students being safe and supported in a positive learning environment. Students should have a sense of optimism about their lives and the future. Our approach emphasises self discipline, responsible decision making and constructive conflict resolution. All members of the school community are respected and encouraged to share the core values that underpin our school community beliefs and link learning and wellbeing.

References

Effective Schools are Engaging Schools - Student Engagement Policy Guidelines	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/wellbeing/codeofconduct.htm
School Accountability and Improvement Framework	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/schoolimprovement/accountability/default.htm
Effective Schools are Engaging Schools	http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/stuman/wellbeing/segpolicy.pdf
Disability Standards for Education	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/wellbeing/disability/handbook/legislation.htm
Safe Schools	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/safety/bullying/default.htm http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/safety/bullying/cyber/default.htm http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/elearningsupportservices/www/default.htm
Charter of Human Rights	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/programs/multicultural/tchhrcharter.htm http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/consol_act/cohrara2006433/
Equal Opportunity Act	http://www.det.vic.gov.au/hrweb/divequity/eoo/eoact.htm
Education and Training Reform Act 2006	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/directions/reviewleg.htm
VIT Teacher Code of Conduct	http://www.vit.vic.edu.au/files/documents/1543_Code-of-Conduct-June-2008.pdf
Charter Compliance Checklist	School Compliance Website

RATIFIED BY SCHOOL COUNCIL: February, 2014